

Sloughen April 15 1815

The Path of the Just like the shining Light :

A
SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

HENRY KEENE, Esq.

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE

FEBRUARY 14, 1797,

IN THE SEVENTY-FIRST YEAR OF HIS AGE;

PREACHED AT

MAZE-POND, SOUTHWARK,

FEBRUARY 26, 1797,

BY JAMES DORE.

The Way of the Just is Uprightness.

ISAIAH.

*They SHINE AS LIGHTS in the World, holding forth the Word of
Life.*

PAUL.

They shall shine forth as the SUN in the Kingdom of their Father.

JESUS CHRIST.

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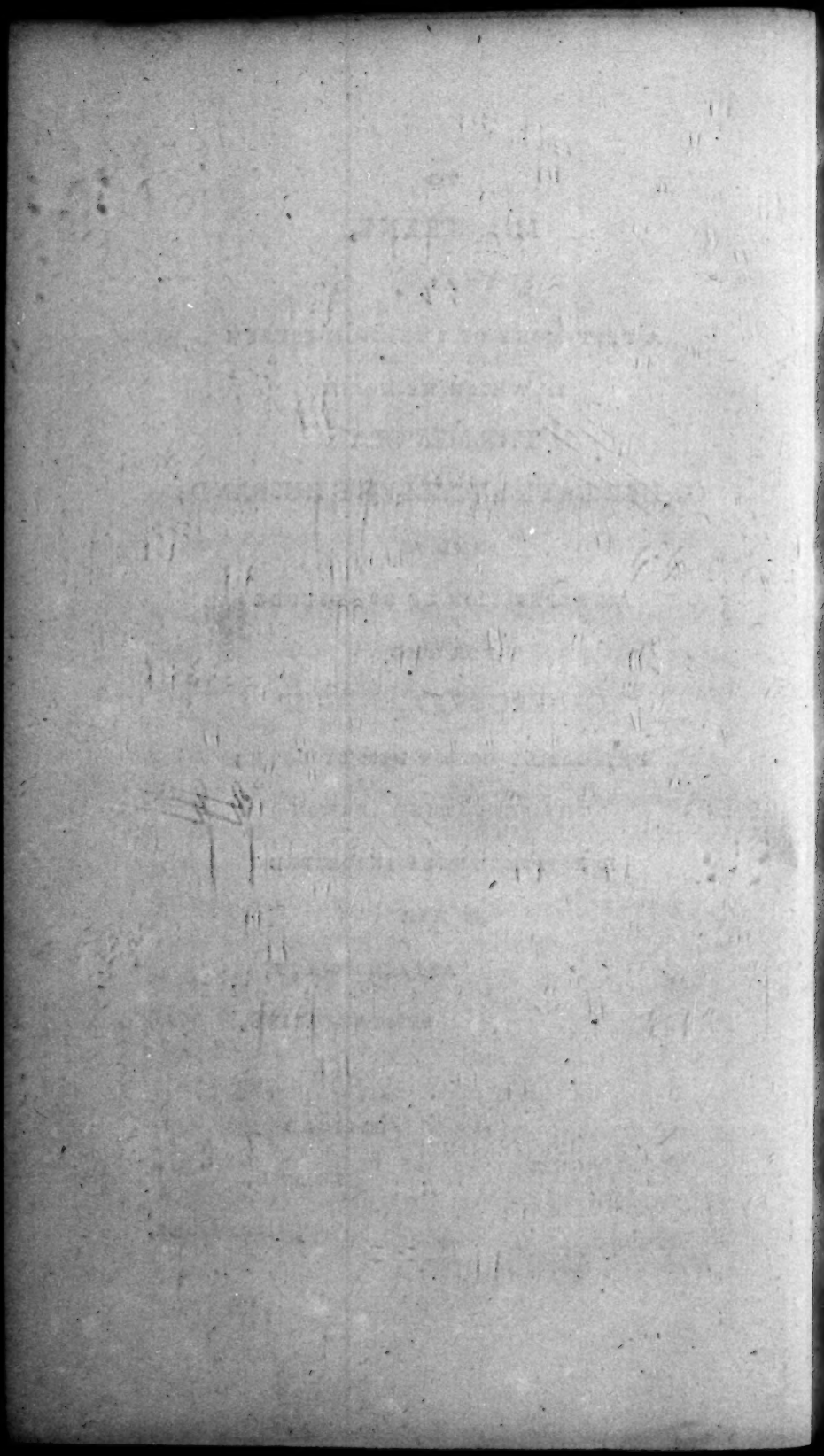


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TO
MRS. KEENE,
AS
A TESTIMONY OF THE HIGH ESTEEM
IN WHICH HE HOLDS
THE MEMORY
OF HER LATE EXCELLENT HUSBAND;
AND AS
AN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE
FOR THE
GENEROUS FRIENDSHIP
UNIFORMLY SHEWN HIM BY BOTH;
THE FOLLOWING SERMON
IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED
BY HER
AFFECTIONATE,
SYMPATHIZING,
AND
OBLIGED
FRIEND,

JAMES DORE.

Wakworth, March 16, 1797.



A

SERMON, &c.

PROVERBS, iv. 18.

*The path of the just is as the shining light, that
shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

IN the multitude of my thoughts within me, under that great affliction with which we have been exercised, no subject appeared more suitable to the present mournful occasion, than that to which Solomon directs our attention in the words you have just heard. My ever dear and honoured FRIEND, whose death we shall now endeavour to improve, said, when conversing with me relative to a funeral discourse, that he had chosen no text, as he hoped no particular notice would be taken of him: but, on my earnestly and affectionately entreating him to leave me free, he was so kind as to lay me under no injunctions. For though my sentiments coincide with his respecting the general impropriety of saying much of the dead, yet in this instance I cannot be silent: not that the partiality of private friendship, or gratitude for unnumbered favours, will prompt my utter-

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ance; but justice due to his character, and a hope that the faint exhibition I shall make of it—a description of some of its prominent features—the statement of a few facts—may be of use, by provoking emulation, and by illustrating the efficacy of divine grace; for by the grace of God he was what he was.

I shall make no apology for introducing myself in this discourse; for if I could not speak from personal knowledge, I should be less particular in the notice which I mean to take of the deceased. Living with him many years, in the most perfect intimacy; viewing him in every light; a daily witness of his words, his tempers, and his conduct; knowing his sentiments, acquainted with his designs, and entering into his feelings; I can truly say, his *path was as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

This most beautiful passage is highly instructive: it contains an animating representation of the nature and excellence, of the progress and consummation, of true religion.

Some, indeed, suppose that the text is descriptive of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the gradual manner in which he was revealed. He is, emphatically speaking, *the JUST ONE*. He is infinitely, essentially, and immutably just;—just in his views, his dispositions, and his conduct. He is just to God, in vindicating his rights; and just to men;—to the impenitent, in executing on
them

them the judgment written; and to believers, in fulfilling his engagements, performing his promises, and maintaining their cause.

The *path* of this *Just One* is as the *shining light*. He is the *sun of righteousness*. He enlightens, purifies, invigorates, and fertilizes the intellectual, moral, and spiritual world. Before his auspicious beams appeared, the world was involved in darkness—total, midnight darkness; *darkness that might be felt*. But, glory be to God! adored be the riches of his grace! this dreary state was not of long continuance; for the sun of righteousness began to dawn in the first promise that was made to man in Paradise, soon after his awful apostacy from God. Abraham and the patriarchs saw him *as the morning spread upon the mountains*. The psalmist and the prophets beheld his nearer approaches, as the sun speedily verging towards the horizon, and just upon the point of rising. To the apostles and the evangelists he arose in all his glory: to them he was *as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds*; and they hailed, with joyful acclamations, the new-formed day. Then, as at the creation of the material world, *the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy*: they sang, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men*.—As Christ was gradually revealed, so his gospel will gradually

prevail, till the whole globe is irradiated with its lustre. Then its great Author will say to those who long *sat in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death, Arise, shine, for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.*

But we will not dwell on this animating theme; for, I apprehend, the text is to be considered as descriptive of every truly good man. Let us,

First, Explain the terms here employed :

Secondly, Illustrate the doctrine which is here taught.

First, The terms are to be explained: the JUST—the PATH of the just—and the SHINING LIGHT, to which the path of the just is compared.

By a JUST, or righteous, man, is meant a *good* man, in the highest acceptation of the term. Such a man is just, in a relative, contrasted, and comparative sense. He is relatively just; just in the sight of God; just in the eye of his law; in virtue of his interest in the perfect righteousness of Christ, which was wrought out for him, is imputed to him, and received by faith. Jesus, the Son of God, is called THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS: to all who believe in him, he is *made righteousness*; for he, *who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

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The man who has evidence of interest in the righteousness of Christ, is sanctified by the *Spirit*, through *the belief of the truth*; so that he is, in some degree, personally just. His *faith in the righteousness of Christ* is *precious*, as it pacifies his conscience, and purifies his heart. So that he is just, contrasted with the openly profane, and the superficially religious; and compared with those who are only externally moral. Thus he may be said to be just to God and man. In a comparative sense he is just to God, as his sentiments of him correspond with his words, his dispositions towards him harmonize with his professions, and his general conduct is consistent with his engagements. It is his habitual desire to be just in regard to God, by ascribing to him *the glory due unto his name*; by rendering him the praises which his favours claim; by yielding him the obedience his laws demand; by using in his service the powers he bestowed; by employing to his honour the talents entrusted to him; and by consecrating himself entirely to *him in whose hands his breath is, and whose are all his ways*. He is just to men, fair in his dealings, exact in his testimony, and faithful to his promises.

The whole of religion may be said to consist in justice, if the term be understood in that extensive latitude in which Solomon uses the word *just* in our text. For if we consider it in relation to the mind, it consists in just sentiments of revealed

truth; if to the conscience, in just decisions; if to the heart, in just affections towards God and man; if to the will, in just volitions; and if to the conduct, in a course of just actions. *The path of the just is as the shining light.*

By the PATH of the just we are to understand his religious course. The term here employed, suggests the idea of a traveller; an idea perfectly applicable to a just man, who, as a *stranger and pilgrim upon earth*, is travelling to a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Earth is not his home: heaven is his country; thither he is going. He walks by faith, not by sight. Christ is *the Way, the old Path, the good Way; the Way of Truth, the Way of Holiness, and the Way of Peace*. The progress which he makes in evangelical knowledge, in his conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ, and in substantial comfort, is represented by this most beautiful and strongly expressive similitude; *It is as the SHINING LIGHT, that shineth more and more.*

Here is an elegant allusion, not to the morning star, but to the sun, the great luminary of the day. When he approaches our benighted hemisphere, the day opens and expands by a gradual increase. The light comes first glimmering with the stars; by almost imperceptible degrees the gloomy shades of night retire, the lustre of the stars is eclipsed, and the sweetly-blushing morn
appears.

appears. Soon the majestic orb arises in the East, and reanimates all nature. His brightness gradually augments, as he apparently rises higher and higher in the firmament, till he reaches his meridian altitude, when all is heightened into the blaze of noon. By pouring forth a flood of light he forms *the perfect day*. Such is *the path of the just*.

Having explained the terms here employed, we are now,

Secondly, To illustrate the doctrine of the text.

This inimitably fine comparison now claims our attention. *The path of the just is as the SHINING LIGHT—shining MORE AND MORE—shining more and more unto THE PERFECT DAY.*

I. *It is as the SHINING LIGHT.*

The general import of this figure should be considered, before we attend to the particular illustration it affords; because Solomon, contrasting the just and the wicked, says, *the path of the just is as the shining light; but the way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.*

Here we may remark the REALITY of religion. There is as much difference between the path of the just, and the way of the wicked, as there is between the light of day, and the darkness of night. Religion bears its own evidence. Light is opposed in Scripture to the darkness of ignorance, of sin, and of misery. Light, as an emblem of knowledge, of purity, and of bliss, is a

beautiful representation of religion. This pleasing, and expressive, figure, is frequently employed by the sacred writers, to illustrate its genuine nature. By the light that shines all around him, the just man sees his way, avoids danger, and walks in peace.

Like the sun he moves in an APPOINTED sphere. He pursues the path which infinite wisdom has prescribed. He does not act at random. He is not governed by caprice. He deviates not from his destined orbit, to court the smiles, or to avoid the frowns, of men. As the sun is not interrupted in his course by the mists and storms of the atmosphere, so the just man, regardless of the false opinions and groundless censures of the world, goes on his way. He moves in too high a sphere to be greatly influenced by those inferior considerations which violently agitate the passions of men *who mind only earthly things.*

The sun, as the most *regular* of all the great bodies in the universe, with which we are acquainted, furnishes us with a striking image of the EXACTNESS with which the just man aims to pursue his course. He resembles, not a *wandering star*, but the sun. There is a general uniformity in his deportment. In the closet, in the family, in the church, and in the world, he is regular in the discharge of duty. He is actuated by the same grand principles, pursues the same important

important ends, and observes the same general rules of moral and religious conduct.

Like the light of day, the religion of the just is CONSPICUOUS. It is not concealed; it ought not to be concealed; it cannot be concealed. Faith, hope, and love, the great principles of religion, will discover themselves. Christians are *the lights of the world, holding forth the word of life*, in their speech, their tempers, and their conduct. They are compared, not to a *candle under a bushel*, but to that great luminary which God hath placed in the heavens. Their *light shines before men*. By their good works they are known. They preserve a proper mean between the ostentation, and the concealment, of their religion. The graces which they exercise in secret, the duties which they discharge in private, prove their religion to themselves; and their general deportment is an evidence of it to those who behold their good conversation. Young persons, under their first serious impressions, often endeavour to conceal their sentiments, and their feelings: but, when *the good work* is really begun, attempts to hide it produce no lasting effect. For, when the conscience is deeply interested, and the heart captivated by the charms of divine love, religion will discover itself. Divine in its origin, and noble in its nature, it disdains confinement. As soon may you involve the globe in total darkness, by extinguishing the lustre of that glorious

glorious mass of light, the sun, as prevent the religion of Christ from discovering itself in a series of pious, just, and benevolent actions.

The path of the just is as the shining light, the most universal *benefactor* in the natural world. This comparison is admirably adapted to illustrate, in various respects, the great *UTILITY* of religion.—When the ruler of the day arises in the East, he *irradiates* our hemisphere; so the just man sheds the light of a good example all around him. His path is instructive: it is a living directory: it shews what is right, and that what is right is practicable. It is not like an *ignis fatuus*, which leads the unwary traveller astray; but it resembles the divine word, by which it is directed, and is *a lamp unto the feet* and *a light unto the paths* of men, shewing them the way in which they may walk with safety, and enjoy peace. When christianity, as delineated in the New Testament, is transcribed on the heart, and exemplified in the conduct, it is taught in language more intelligible, more eloquent, more sublime, more affecting and impressive, than any tongue can utter. It speaks, at once, to the understanding, to the conscience, and to the heart.—As the sun *purifies* the atmosphere, by destroying noxious vapors, so the example of a good man is sometimes the means which God employs to show, by the force of contrast, the heinousness of sin, to confound transgressors, to bring them to repentance,

penitance, and so to promote their purity.—Thus, as the vital heat of the sun, in virtue of that influence which pervades all nature, *fructifies* the fields and the gardens, so the conduct of the just, may, through the blessing of God, cause others to bring forth the fruits of repentance. The ungodly, beholding the good conversation of those who fear God, are sometimes won over to the cause of righteousness. Genuine religion, appearing in the temper and the life, possesses a vital warmth, which, like the genial beams of the sun, invigorates, animates, and cheers. The path of the just, therefore, resembles the resplendent orb, to which it is likened in the text, as it is eminently beneficial. A good man, by his instruction, his prayers, his generous deeds, and his worthy example, is a blessing to all to whom his influence extends.

As it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun, so the path of the just is PLEASANT; it is pleasant to themselves, and to others: they themselves enjoy the pure and refined pleasures resulting from religious action, devout reflection, and heavenly hope; and their friends, their relatives, all who witness their religion, see a most delightful object—an object, glorious as the sun in all his lustre.

The supreme BEAUTY, and transcendent EXCELLENCE, of religion, are here strikingly displayed. The sun, to which it is likened, is the most

most glorious object in the natural world. The path of the just man, like this great luminary, casts a splendor all around him. Religious wisdom, shining in his temper and behaviour, shews its own excellence. It possesses, and displays, a self-evidencing beauty. A character formed on the model of *Jesus, the Son of God*, who was *full of grace and truth, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person*, is truly amiable. It is an assemblage of excellencies. It unites, and exhibits, all the estimable, and all the lovely qualities. It has a charm to captivate every enlightened mind, and every truly virtuous heart. Even a savage breast is not totally insensible to the moral beauty of that man, who governs his passions, whose devotion is genuine, whose integrity is inflexible, and whose benevolence is pure, warm, and diffusive. The lustre of high birth, the glare of opulence, the splendor of elevated rank, the brightness of talents, are mere tinsel, in comparison with the glory of religion. This is the sterling gold; or, rather, to use a stronger figure, and one more congenial with the spirit of the text, this is as the glory of the sun. *It is as the light, the SHINING light.*

But, as the sun, with all his glory, is not free from spots; so the most accomplished human character is sullied with moral stains. If God, therefore, were to mark iniquity, no one could stand before him.—The sun is sometimes obscured
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by clouds and mists; so is the path of the just. The clouds of adversity may, for a time, conceal the most splendid virtues, and the mists of prejudice obscure the most shining actions.—But the grand point of resemblance, on which our attention should be principally fixed, remains to be considered. We proceed, therefore, as proposed, to shew that *the path of the just is as the shining light*, in that

II. It *shineth* MORE AND MORE.

The comparison is taken, not from the morning cloud, or the early dew, which soon passeth away; nor from those exhalations, which, raised by heat from the earth, glitter in the air with momentary brightness, and then, falling back to the ground whence they sprang, disappear for ever; but from that resplendent orb which *shineth more and more*. This illustrates the *progressive* nature of religion. At first it may be obscure, like the sun in a cloud. It is not, at its rise, equally conspicuous in all, as every morning is not equally bright: but its lustre is gradually augmented.

From the constitution of the human soul, we infer that man is designed for a progressive state. By imperceptible degrees the mental powers strengthen.—That religion is progressive, its very nature indicates. If you consider it as consisting in the illumination of the mind, the rectitude of the will, the spirituality of the affections, and the peace of the conscience, you will see that it admits

of increase. Its progressive nature is represented, in the holy Scriptures, under many expressive figures; some taken from the growth of the vegetable tribes, some from the different stages of human life, some from the progress of a traveller who steadily pursues his journey, and this, in our text, from the increasing lustre of the sun—the soul of the planetary system. It shines *more and more*.

The progressive nature of religion is generally exemplified in the experience and conduct of the just; and of such only our text speaks. Would to God that all who make profession of religion were of this character! Then none would draw back unto perdition. Some good men, indeed, seem to stand still; and others, for a season, appear to decline; but, in general, they shine *more and more, increasing in the knowledge of God, abounding in every good word and work, and filled with all joy and peace in believing*.

Thus to advance in the divine life is the aim of the just. They desire to grow in the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord, by forming clearer apprehensions, more enlarged views, and a better connected system, of revealed truth. The man of real religion feels the importance of truth. The more he knows, the more he wishes to know. Light is not more grateful to his eye, than knowledge to his mind; and particularly the knowledge of Christ, which purifies, ennobles, and delights the soul. The pleasures which an acquaintance with
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Christ affords, make him desirous of higher attainments. A sense of the rich advantages resulting from this knowledge, invigorates him in its pursuit.

Christians, realize the obligations you are under, to be *increasing in the knowledge of God*. Let a noble ambition inspire your minds: imitate the angels, who are represented as looking into the things which concern our salvation. Search the Scriptures; they are given you that you may know Christ; there his glories are revealed. Let your reason, the distinguishing excellence of man, be employed in the service of religion; that you may discern things that differ, *compare spiritual things with spiritual, and know the things which are freely given you of God*. You cannot employ your leisure time in a more rational, pleasant, or edifying manner, than in studying *the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation*. converse much with your christian friends on those subjects which most interest your heart; for religious conversation, properly conducted, is a source of improvement. Pray for *the spirit of wisdom and understanding*, that you may see more of the glory of divine truth, enjoy the rich consolations it administers, and *be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you*. Above all, let it be your constant aim to reduce knowledge to practice. Increase in your acquaint-

acquaintance with the inspired volume, not for ostentation, not for applause, but for real use; that, feeling more of the power of truth, in promoting your holiness, you may display its excellence to greater advantage, in a *conversation* that *becometh the gospel*.

The just, who are compared to the sun, are growing up in their conformity to Christ. They *mortify the deeds of the body*; cultivate the graces of the Spirit; and pursue, with zeal and cheerfulness, a perfection of holiness. Considering the importance of the object, their vast distance from it, the danger of relaxing their exertions, and the animating examples set before them in the Bible, *they press towards the mark*. They watch and pray, and strive against sin. They frequently review their ways, endeavour to keep conscience tender, and weigh the great motives to holiness which the gospel suggests.

In the use of means, accompanied with the blessing of God, they *grow in grace*—they shine *more and more*. Their reverence of God, their preference of his word to every other book, their delight in spiritual exercises, and their esteem of real *saints*, who are *the excellent of the earth*, are promoted, in proportion as they enter into the spirit of the gospel. Their dependance upon Jesus Christ is more steadfast; they become more willing to receive instruction or reproof; more strict in examining themselves; and more candid
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towards others. Amidst the vicissitudes of life, they possess greater equanimity; their resignation to the will of God is more habitual; their regard to divine approbation more fixed; and their desire to do good, that God may be glorified, more steady. *Their path is as the shining light, shining more and more.*

Hence their serenity, peace, and joy, increase. If their religious pleasures be less intense, they are more solid and abiding. They rest more on the stability of truth, than on the fickleness of mental feeling. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* He has peace in his conscience, through the blood of atonement; peace in his mind, because it is reconciled to the dispensations of Providence; and peace in his heart, as the passions, under the regulating influence of supreme love to God, are reduced to harmony. This peace is an earnest of heaven: it is a foretaste of future bliss: it is an anticipation of glory. The *light shining more and more* indicates the approach of PERFECT DAY. Let us then—

III. Contemplate *the PERFECTION of the just man's day.*

A life of faith in Jesus Christ, and of devotedness to God on earth, will be crowned with a perfection of knowledge, holiness, and felicity in the heavenly state. The just will persevere to the end, and receive *the prize of their high calling.*

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They will shine *more and more unto* THE PERFECT DAY. Their future day will be perfect, contrasted with the state of the wicked, who will be in the regions of darkness and horror; and compared with their own past state, in this world of imperfect knowledge, purity, and bliss. To absolute perfection the just will never arrive; as there will always be room for improvement. They will not, like the sun, rise to a certain point, and then descend; but they will continue to rise higher and higher, and to shine *more and more*.

Their views of the infinite attributes of Deity, as displayed in the works of creation, in the natural and moral government of the universe, and especially in the grand scheme of human redemption, accomplished by the labors and sufferings of Jesus, the Son of God, will be for ever expanding. But, in comparison of what little we now know, the KNOWLEDGE we shall attain in heaven may be said to be perfect. *Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now we know in part; but when that which is in part shall be done away, that which is perfect shall come.* Then, perhaps, the wonders of the material world may be fully displayed, and we shall be acquainted with its extent, the variety of its parts, the links by which they are connected, and the laws which regulate the whole. Then the mysteries of providence will be unfolded; and we shall be able to reconcile the prescience of God with

with the liberty of man, the holiness of Deity with the existence of sin, and divine benevolence with human misery. We shall see why the wicked prosper, and why the righteous are oppressed. The great plan of our salvation will, at that transporting period, disclose a thousand charms which are now concealed. We shall better *comprehend with all saints, what is the length, and breadth, and depth, and height, of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.* We shall see the King of Heaven in all the beauties of his holiness, and in all the glories of his grace. The glories of the Redeemer's person, character, offices, and work, will be revealed. *We shall see him as he is : we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known.*

Our intellectual powers, now feeble, will then be strengthened; the sphere of their operation, which is now contracted, will then be enlarged; the materials of knowledge, now comparatively few, will then be abundant. What now interrupts the free and vigorous exercise of the mental faculties will no longer exist. There will be no want of application in the pursuit of truth. The spirit of the world will no more dissipate our attention. Secular occupations will no more engage us, prejudice never darken the understanding, nor depraved affections form a false medium of vision.

A perfection of knowledge will be attended with a perfection of HOLINESS. Here, the just may be betrayed into sin through their ignorance; hurried away into criminal excesses through the impetuosity of passion; surprized by danger, pressed by their necessities, borne down by their afflictions, seduced by the objects which press upon their senses, corrupted by evil communications, allured by seducing examples, they may, through the weakness of their religious principles in this imperfect state, contract much guilt: but in heaven, none of these occasions of sin will exist. There will be no depravity within, no temptation without: nothing will enter that defileth. There, perfect holiness will for ever reign. *The spirits of just men, made perfect, will serve God day and night, without interruption, weariness, or end.* Nothing will cool the ardour of their devotion, or alienate their hearts from God. Their graces, compleat in number, and perfect in degree, will shine with a divine brightness.

Their holiness being complete, their FELICITY will be perfect. They will be delivered from all the natural, as well as the moral, evils to which they are now exposed. No more will they be afflicted with pain of body, or distress of mind. The loss of property, the frustration of hope, and worldly perplexities, will no longer afflict them. No more will they feel anguish of spirit through the

the treachery of professed friends, the malice of avowed enemies, or the improper conduct, the affliction, or the death, of those they love. Ignorance of what they now wish to know, will no longer disquiet them. No more will they *groan, being burthened* with a body of sin and death. Never more will they be troubled, because God hides his face. No! they will enjoy his favour and friendship for ever. The light of God's countenance will always beam upon the just. Their noblest powers will be delightfully employed in his service. They will see his face, rejoice in his love, and celebrate his praise. They will be in his *presence, where there is fulness of joy; and at his right hand, where there are pleasures for ever more. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto THE PERFECT DAY.*

Such, through rich and sovereign grace, was the *character*—such was the *path*—and such, therefore, we doubt not, is now the *perfection* of our late EXCELLENT FRIEND.

In very early life, he was numbered with the just on earth. Awakened to a sense of guilt, convinced of the imperfection of all his services, and knowing that the divine law requires complete obedience, he trusted in the righteousness of Christ for his justification in the sight of God. Enjoying peace in his conscience, through faith in the Redeemer, and feeling his obligations to

him from whom it was derived, he honoured his legislative character, and treated his institutions with respect. Faithful to the dictates of his conscience, he was baptized on a profession of faith, and became a member of this church. Through the influence of the Holy Spirit, and the instrumentality of the revealed truth, he was just to the God whom he adored, to the faith which he professed, and to the religious engagements into which he entered with this community.

As a just man, he would not sacrifice his conscience, prostitute a divine ordinance, and betray the rights of the Head of the church, by qualifying for the office of *justice of the peace*, though many years in the king's commission: but, had it not been for the baneful operation of the TEST ACT, which prevented him from administering justice in the quality of a *magistrate*, a man of his enlightened mind, strict principles, and public spirit, might have been a blessing to the district. He was just to men, to their persons, to their character, and to their property. His well-established reputation for strict integrity, induced many, in the large circle of his acquaintance, to repose in him the greatest confidence, and to request him to discharge various offices of trust.

The path of this just man, it may be safely affirmed, was as the shining light. His religion
was

was genuine; it was regulated by the divine word, and steady in its operation. In his devotions he was regular. The altar of God, erected in his family, he did not neglect; and his evenings being spent at home, domestic worship was not delayed, to the inconvenience of the servants, till a late hour. This fact is the more deserving of notice, as his company was greatly courted; for he was extensively known, connected with many public institutions, much beloved, and well qualified to administer instruction and delight. Endued with good natural parts; enriched with much important information; of a communicative disposition; singularly happy in relating anecdotes, with which his memory was well fraught; possessed of a fund of good humour; easy of access; affable in his disposition; pleasing in his manners, and animated in his conversation; he was the soul of company, the bright ornament of the circles in which he moved, and deservedly the first object of attention in almost every social friendly meeting. When company assembled at his own house, the hour of prayer was not forgotten. On the day devoted to the public service of God, he would never encourage visits.

How regular he was in his attendance in this place, you need not be informed. In this respect he was a perfect model. Never did I know him absent, unless he was on a journey, or confined by illness. From the time of his making a pro-

session, his conduct, as I have been informed, was thus regular. Nor was it personal respect to the pastors, (though well known to be great), nor merely attachment to their ministry, that influenced his conduct; but a deep and abiding sense of obligation to attend where he had a name and a place; respect to the church, with which he was united; an expectation of enjoying the presence, and obtaining the blessing, of God, in the regular use of appointed means; and a full conviction of the dangerous consequences which result from the indulgence of curiosity in the concerns of religion. With what steadiness he attended the meetings of the church, all the members know; and with what good sense, pertinency and fervor, humility, reverence and apparent delight, he often led their devotions, they can witness.

Like the light of heaven, his religion was conspicuous. It could not be hid. Its benign influences were felt by many. He was truly a blessing to society.—He was a blessing to his *family*. Would you know the real character of a man, you must see him at home, where he wears no mask. There, sometimes, is seen a character the very reverse of that which is assumed abroad. How affecting the thought! How distressing it is to see the public assertor of liberty a domestic tyrant! the patron of schemes of general benevolence, regardless of those little daily kindnesses,
those

those delicate attentions, those silent unostentatious charities, on which the happiness of families so much depends ! the generous subscriber to the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, neglecting religion in his own house !—Not so our friend. Honoured by his friendship, long have I witnessed his private excellencies, as a relative, and a master. Not only the affectionate partner of his life, whose loss is great indeed ; not only his numerous relatives, to whom he was a father : but the servants in his family, can, and will, bear testimony to his kindness. While they honoured him as a master, they esteemed him as a friend. For he required no unreasonable services, put on no imperious airs, assumed no haughty tones. The kindness with which he spoke to them, (calling them by their names), the sweetness of his temper, and the mildness of his manners, rendered their situation pleasant, and induced them to serve him with diligence, fidelity, and affection. They who served him in his family when I first knew him, served him to the last ; and to their mutual honour be it said, that there was nothing which, for so good a master, they would not have done. Did every master resemble him, there would be, I am well persuaded, less reason to complain of bad servants.

He was a blessing not only to his family, but also to this church, of which he was an exemplary MEMBER for *near half a century*, and for *above thirty years* a very useful and much honoured

noured DEACON. For this important office, which he used well, he was eminently qualified, by his prudence, fidelity, patience, candour, activity, firmness without obstinacy, affability, compassion for the poor, pacific disposition, and uncommon attachment to the church, whose interests lay near his heart to the very day of his death. When destitute of a pastor, with what wisdom, steadiness, and affection, he presided at the meetings of the church, they who were then members will inform us. His usefulness in this society cannot be ascertained.

But the sphere of his usefulness spread wider than his family, and this church. His influence in various departments of civil society, was virtuously exerted for the benefit of many: for such was his philanthropy, that he was willing to serve every one. From his active services, from his wise counsels, and from the generous use he made of his property, in donations and loans, to those who applied for his aid, great advantages have been derived.

In him the poor, the fatherless, and the widow, have lost a friend. For some, indeed, whom he remembered in his life, he provided in the prospect of his death. So that, though his head is levelled with the dust, the source of his bounty will continue to flow, to make *widows hearts sing for joy* all the days of their lives. His enlarged mind formed a scheme of benevolence,
known

known among us by the name of *The Sympathetic Society*, for the assistance of poor ministers, of our denomination, who, by age or infirmities, are incapacitated for the duties of their office. Had this scheme been carried into effect before his departure, his generous heart would have rejoiced in the thought, that some highly respectable and useful persons might be rendered happy by it, in the decline of life, or under great affliction.

Surely the *path* of such a man was *as the shining light*; and, with pleasure, I add, that it shone MORE AND MORE. Yes, never, since I have had the benefit of his acquaintance, did it shine with so bright a lustre, as in his last, long, and trying illness. So pious, so resigned, so patient, so full of benevolent attentions, it was a privilege to be with him! Ah! with what melancholy pleasure did I sit by his side, and listen to his words! *Never before*, he informed me, *did sin appear to him so exceeding sinful, his guilt so great, or his life so useless; but, casting himself at the foot of the cross, he trusted in the blood of Jesus Christ for the salvation of his soul. Sin, he said, could not be expiated without an atonement: but the atonement of Christ was all-sufficient; on that he built his hope, and his confidence in him was the source of his peace. Never before*, he told me, *did he derive so much pleasure, as he experienced in his last illness,*
from

from such considerations as these ; That Jesus, the Son of God, came into the world ; that he came to save sinners ; that his essential Deity, and perfect holiness, qualified him for his work ; and that the gospel affords encouragement for every sinner to trust in him, for pardon, for acceptance with God, and for eternal life. At another time he said, that a profession of faith in Jesus Christ always appeared to him important ; but never so important as when he viewed it in the light of eternity ; and he wished that his young friends, who have lately made a profession, might be told, ON THE WORD OF A DYING MAN, what solemn obligations they had laid themselves under to God, and to the church.

From his general conversation it was evident, that God never appeared to him so great and so good, Christ so precious, or religion so truly interesting, as under his complicated afflictions. He bowed submission to the divine will : on Christ he placed all his confidence : faith in him was his support ; and prayer was his chief delight. Besides the morning and evening sacrifice of prayer and of praise, which the family offered in his chamber, frequently did he ask me to pray with him, saying, *the happiest moments he enjoyed were spent in prayer ;* and with what devotion did he, as long as he was able to speak, add the loud AMEN ! The sound, the solemn sound, still vibrates in my ear.

O ! who

O! who can say how gracious God was to him! When his whole frame was violently agitated, through excess of pain, I heard him faintly articulate, as he reclined his head on my bosom, *God is pitiful, he is pitiful*. This thought suppressed every murmur, silenced every complaint, and kept his soul in perfect peace. Often, during my acquaintance with him, did he express his fears, lest, in the view of death, his faith should fail, his hope forsake him, and his courage sink; but, as death approached, those fears vanished; for the sting of death was taken away; its terrors fled; and he prayed at times for his dismissal.

Thus, at the close of life, we saw in him the reality, the power, and the excellence, of religion, strikingly exemplified. When he took leave of his relations, bidding them, as he then supposed, the last farewell, he shone in all his glory. What faith! what magnanimity! what kindness! did he then display! never before did I witness a scene so grand, so glorious, so affecting: it was the triumph of religion. How interesting were his instructions! how wise and pious his advice! how benevolent and affectionate his wishes! how singularly impressive his manner!

After this he lived several weeks, but, to the very last, his reason, and his comforts, were continued. The morning on which he expired, his speech failed; but by squeezing my hand he answered

answered my inquiries, and told me he was happy. When the awful moment came, he gently fell asleep: so gentle was his dismissal, that to his sorrowful relations and friends, who stood around his bed, it was known only by the cessation of the pulse. To him what a happy change! he shone *more and more* on earth, and is now arrived at PERFECT DAY. His knowledge, his holiness, and his felicity, are perfect. This consideration is adapted to reconcile the sorrowful widow, the mourning relatives, and the afflicted church, to the loss which they sustain. *Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

With you, my *dear* and *honored* FRIEND, who stood in the nearest relation to the deceased, I tenderly sympathize: with your tears I mingle my own: for I too have lost a friend—one worthy of the name—a wife, a steady, an affectionate friend; one who not only kindly admitted me to his house, and incorporated me with his family, but received me to his bosom; with whom I have had the honor, and the happiness, to live, on terms of the most intimate, the most endearing, and the most delightful friendship, for near *fourteen* years; a friend, whose virtues I must always revere, whose memory will be ever dear to my heart, and whose uniform kindness to me, has left that deep impression on my soul, which time can never erase. *My FATHER! my FATHER! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.*

But let us *not sorrow as those who have no hope*. Let us cherish that hope which animated his mind, in the prospect of dissolution; the hope of meeting again, in a happy world, never more to part. Then shall we unite with all the ransomed of the Lord, in celebrating THE PRAISES OF GOD, AND OF THE LAMB, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

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